

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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SSO-00 /052 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

EUR/P - MR. JERABEK

IO/P - MR. BLACHLY

SSM - MR. MC ANDREW

NEA/ARP - MR. DICKMAN

AF/P - MR. POPE

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

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USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
USMISSION SINAI
USCINCEUR

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GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL, CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JULY 12

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR JULY 12,
1976:

Q. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, THE SECRETARY SAID AT HIS NEWS
CONFERENCE, THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE FORMATION OF A
(I FORGET THE EXACT WORDS HE USED, BUT) "MULTIPARTY
CONFERENCE ON LEBANON" TO TAKE CARE OF THE PROBLEMS ON
LEBANON.

HE HAS SAID THAT IN A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT FORUMS. HAVE
YOU ANY IDEA OF WHAT HE HAS IN MIND? WHICH PARTIES, FOR
WHAT PURPOSE?

A. I THINK HE HAS TALKED ABOUT A ROUND TABLE SORT OF
MEETING OF THE LEBANESE PARTIES. I KNOW WHEN AMBASSADOR
DEAN BROWN WAS THERE HE WAS URGING SUCH A MEETING, AND I
AM SURE THAT IS WHAT AMBASSADOR SEELYE IS ALSO DOING.

Q. IS THERE ANY DISTINCTION IN WHAT HE IS TALKING ABOUT
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AND WHAT THE FRENCH HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT IN BEING

UNABLE TO GET GOING? HAS HE GOT A DIFFERENT PLAN OR A
DIFFERENT APPROACH? OR IS IT BASICALLY THE FRENCH PLAN
FLYING UNDER THE KISSINGER FLAG?

A. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER ANYONE HAS A PROPRIETARY INTER-
EST --

Q. I JUST WONDERED, IS THERE ANY DISTINCTION PARTICULARLY?

A. I THINK A NUMBER OF PEOPLE HAVE BEEN URGING THAT THE LEBANESE PARTIES GET TOGETHER.

Q. NO, BUT I MEAN -- THE "ROUND TABLE" IDEA -- THE WHOLE APPROACH.

A. AGAIN, THAT IS A QUESTION OF THE PRINCIPAL LEBANESE PARTIES GETTING TOGETHER AND WORKING OUT A SOLUTION. AND THAT HAS BEEN GOING ON -- THAT HAS BEEN URGED NOW FOR SEVERAL MONTHS.

Q. IN OTHER WORDS --

Q. HOW IS IT THE SECRETARY DOES NOT HAVE IN MIND OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS PERHAPS GETTING INVOLVED IN THIS -- OR FRANCE, THE UNITED STATES ETC. HE JUST HAS IN MIND THE LEBANESE PARTIES.

A. I THINK IN TERMS OF THE ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION, HE IS TALKING ABOUT THE LEBANESE PARTIES.

WE OBVIOUSLY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS HAVE A CONCERN AND RESPONSIBILITY TO EXERCISE IN LEBANON, AS WELL -- MAINLY, ONE OF RESTRAINT.

Q. WELL WAIT A MINUTE, TO CLARIFY THE POINT, THE FRENCH PLAN, WHICH THE SECRETARY ENDORSED IN PARIS, IF YOU REMEMBER, INCLUDED ALSO THE ARAB STATES THAT HAD BEEN ENGAGED IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER IN THE CIVIL WAR.

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ARE YOU NOW PULLING BACK?

A. NO.

Q. ALL RIGHT.

Q. WHAT LEBANESE PARTIES?

A. I AM NOT PREPARED TO PROVIDE A LIST. IT IS INCLUSIVE OF THE PRINCIPAL LEBANESE PARTIES.

Q. WELL, WOULD THE PLO BE ONE PARTY?

A. I DO NOT THINK THAT BY DEFINITION, THEY ARE A LEBANESE

PARTY.

Q. I WOULD JUST LIKE TO GO BACK TO THIS 'INCLUSIVE' LIST THAT YOU ARE NOT PREPARED TO PROVIDE. THE LEBANESE PARTIES, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE CHRISTIANS, THE PALESTINIANS, THE MOSLEMS, THE SYRIANS -- THOSE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO ARE FIGHTING THERE NOW -- WOULD THEY BE THE FOUR PRINCIPAL ONES WHO WOULD MEET IN A ROUND TABLE?

A. NO, I THINK IT IS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LEBANESE PARTIES, WHICH IS THE CHRISTIANS -- YOU HAVE VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF THE MOSLEM COMMUNITY (THE SUNNIS, THE SHIITES, THE DRUSES.) THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IS DIVIDED AS YOU KNOW, BETWEEN THE MARONITES AND THE ORTHODOX -- I AM TALKING ABOUT THE LEBANESE PARTIES.

Q. SO THEN YOU ARE NOT INCLUDING THE PLO OR THE SYRIANS?

A. NOT IN WHAT WE HAVE BEEN URGING -- THAT THE LEBANESE THEMSELVES ORGANIZE IT. AND I DO NOT THINK THAT IS -- AT LEAST MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT IS WHAT THE SECRETARY IS REFERRING TO AND THAT IS WHAT AMBASSADOR BROWN WAS URGING AS HE MET WITH VARIOUS LEBANESE LEADERS AND THAT IS WHAT AMBASSADOR SEELYE HAS BEEN URGING.

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Q. WELL JUST TO TURN IT AROUND A LITTLE BIT THEN, IT IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S POSITION THAT THERE COULD BE AN EFFECTIVE NEGOTIATION AND SETTLEMENT OF THE CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON WITHOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF THE PALESTINIANS NEGOTIATING AT THE TABLE.

IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE SAYING?

A. WHAT WE ARE SAYING AND WHAT WE HAVE BEEN DOING IS:

WE HAVE BEEN URGING THE LEBANESE PARTIES -- DIRECTLY URGING THE LEBANESE PARTIES THEMSELVES -- TO SOLVE AND END THE CIVIL WAR.

AND IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, IT OBVIOUSLY HAS TO BE THE LEBANESE WHO DO THIS.

Q. BUT FIRST OF ALL, YOU DON'T CONSIDER THE PALESTINIANS A LEBANESE PARTY -- THAT IS CLEAR?

A. THAT IS RIGHT.

Q. BUT IT ISN'T CLEAR WHETHER YOU ARE SAYING IT IS ALL RIGHT WITH YOU IF THE LEBANESE PARTIES, AS YOU DEFINE THEM, INVITE THE PALESTINIANS TO THE NEGOTIATIONS -- THAT IS AN OPEN QUESTION?

A. OBVIOUSLY, WE CANNOT DICTATE TO THE LEBANESE HOW THEY WORK IT OUT, THEMSELVES, AND WHAT OTHER PARTIES THEY MAY HAVE CONTACT WITH.

Q. HAS THE STATE DEPARTMENT WHISPERED IN ANY OF THESE LEBANESE FACTIONS' EARS THAT WE WOULDN'T BE TERRIBLY UPSET IF THE PALESTINIANS WERE INVITED TO THESE NEGOTIATIONS?

A. I AM NOT AWARE THAT WE HAVE WHISPERED THAT WAY. NO.

Q. I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT. THERE IS NO DOUBT IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S MIND THAT THE PALESTINIANS ARE A PARTY TO THE FIGHTING?
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A. THERE IS NO QUESTION ABOUT THAT.

Q. SO IF YOU ARE GOING TO PUT AN END TO THE FIGHTING, HOW CAN YOU EXPECT TO DO IT WITHOUT INCLUDING ALL THE PARTIES TO THAT FIGHTING?

A. OUR CONTACTS ARE WITH THE LEBANESE.

Q. YES, BUT IN THOSE CONTACTS ARE YOU NOT INCLUDING IN THE LIST OF PEOPLE TO BE TALKING WITH PALESTINIANS, WHO ARE PART OF THE FIGHTING?

A. WE ARE NOT TALKING WITH THE PLO, NO.

Q. I KNOW. THAT'S NOT WHAT I ASKED YOU. BUT IN OUR TALKS, FOR EXAMPLE, WITH THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, ARE WE NOT SAYING THAT THE PALESTINIANS WOULD HAVE TO NATURALLY BE INCLUDED IN A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION TO DISCUSS THE END OF THE FIGHTING?

A. YOU KNOW THE LEBANESE THEMSELVES HAVE BEEN HAVING VARIOUS CONTACTS INTERNALLY. BUT THAT'S NOT OUR CONCERN. WHAT WE ARE TELLING THE LEBANESE PARTIES IS THAT THEY

SHOULD GET TOGETHER AND RESOLVE THIS ISSUE--BECAUSE, AFTER ALL, IT IS THE LEBANESE PARTIES THAT ARE REPRESENTED IN THE PARLIAMENT, FOR EXAMPLE--AND THE SYRIAN PROPOSAL WHICH WAS ACCEPTED LAST JANUARY DEALT WITH

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE LEBANESE POLITICAL FORCES IN THE
LEBANESE PARLIAMENT.

Q. PERHAPS WE COULD GET AT THIS SOME OTHER WAY. IS IT
YOUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE PALESTINIANS, WHETHER THEY
ARE CALLED PLO OR SOME OTHER NAME, ARE EXCLUDED FROM THE
FRENCH PROPOSAL WHICH THE SECRETARY APPROVED OF TWO
WEEKS AGO?

A. I REALLY AM NOT THAT COMPLETELY BRIEFED ON THE
FRENCH PROPOSAL. I WOULD HAVE TO CHECK INTO IT.

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